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Rev. James Troup

of Helensburgh

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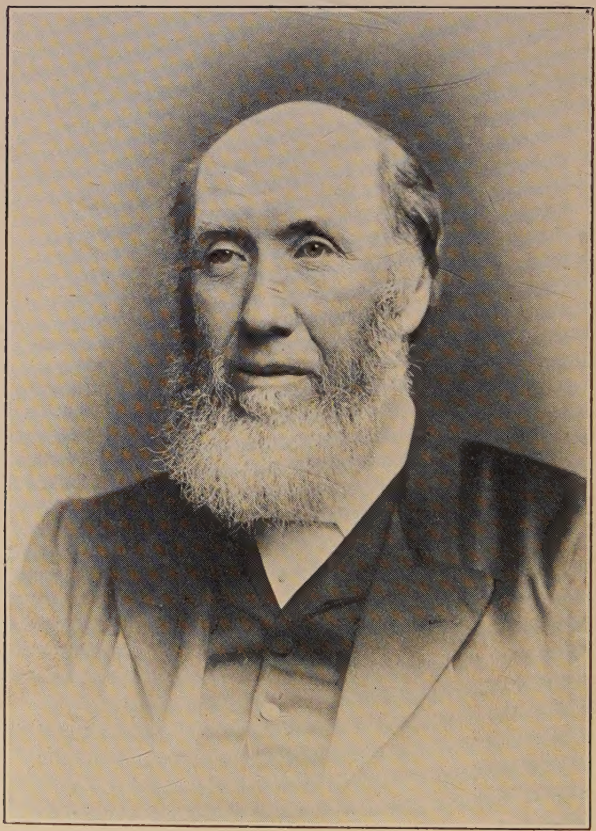

From a Photograph by John Stuart, Ltd.

REV. JAMES TROUP, M.A.

Memoir of

REV. JAMES TROUP, M.A.,

Minister of
Helensburgh Congregational Church.

BY

JAMES STARK, D.D.,

AUTHOR OF "LIFE'S STAGES," "JOHN MURKER OF BANFF,"
"DR. KIDD OF ABERDEEN," ETC.

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NOTE.

THANKS are due to various friends for help so lovingly rendered; but special mention must be made of the large contribution from the pen of the Rev. Robert Troup, M.A., which includes both the earlier and closing days of the subject of the memoir.

J. S.

ABERDEEN, *October, 1897.*

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INTRODUCTION.

NO one in Helensburgh can be in any doubt as to the depth and peculiar sacredness of the impression made by the life of the Rev. James Troup that was closed with such startling suddenness, and yet in circumstances which in some respects were ideal, and such as he himself, we believe, would have desired. It is indeed given to few men to awaken a regard so widespread, that is at the same time so tender and reverential. It is not mere regret that a blameless and amiable man of long-continued public usefulness has passed away; the feeling represented by those who knew him is that of grief at the rupture of a tie, the loss of the touch of a personal friendship.

What was the secret of the hold which he had

of persons diverse in age, circumstances, and character? Such intensity and catholicity of appreciation had roots somewhere which it may be for our instruction to unearth.

But is it not the case that already we see our friend in his real proportions as we did not when he was with us? We took his society as we take sunshine, without always having distinctly before our minds the reasons why we were drawn to him. We seldom analyse the sunshine: we bask in it; we are content that it warms us and makes us glad. But when it declines, and we are chilled, we consciously realise what the possession was by its loss.

It was the singular combination of strength and gentleness which made Mr. Troup the man that he was. He had strength of mind and character; but so have many: the distinctive charm of the man whose death we mourn lay in the fact that the strength was a fund held in reserve for the benefit of others. His quiet power, calm self-possession, patient, generous consideration for others won the confidence of all, especially of those in need of counsel and sympathy. No one

could ask less for himself: no one was more prompt to tax himself for the sake of others, yet it never seemed to be a tax, but only an opportunity to be graciously welcomed.

His piety also, which seemed to be so natural, as much a part of himself as his buoyant cheerfulness, made you feel that heaven as well as earth had something to say for itself in every judgment he came to or service he rendered. The brother beloved was a saint of God, and in leaning upon him we could look up to him, and far beyond him. We loved him because he was every inch a man, firm and stable as the rock, yet gentle as a woman, guileless and mirthful as a child, his sunny manner coming not only from a healthy nature and happy temperament, but from converse with God as constant as it was unobtrusive.

We send out this little book to the world, not only as a tribute to his memory, but as a means of prolonging his influence, and, in so far as the printed page can contribute to do it, renewing the satisfaction and pleasure we derived from his society. We desire to preserve and perhaps do

a little in distributing the fragrance of his sainted and precious memory. The crushed and faded violet between the leaves in a book of remembrance is not the flower as we knew it, as a living thing among the living things of nature, but some of the scent remains to remind us of what it once was.

If we are at pains to secure a good portrait of a friend who put something precious into our lives which is still there, should we not endeavour to preserve the memorials of the salient features of his life and character, and try to discover the secret of his power?

CHAPTER I.

BIRTH AND PARENTAGE.

THE Rev. James Troup was born on the 20th July, 1829, in Rhynie, a village in Aberdeenshire, nestling at the foot of the Tap o' Noth, one of the most shapely hills in the north of Scotland, which draws many visitors on account of its "vitrified" summit. The district around, known as Strathbogie, is famed for the number of strong, capable men it has sent out who have made their mark in various parts of the world as journalists, preachers, and missionaries.

The pioneers and early supporters of the Evangelical and Evangelistic movement in the North, which arose at the end of the last century, were men who had ideas, who read the Scriptures, and were more obedient to their

teachings than to the maxims of the world. The consequence was, that being "picked" men to begin with, their native force was augmented by the training they received in the fellowship and service of the little Congregational Churches of which they were members. The subject of this memoir, in recalling the men and the scenes of his youth in the village and Independent Church of Rhynie, delighted to speak of the sturdy character and simple dignity of the "peasant princes," as Carlyle called similar men in his own native place. The proverbial hardness of the northern nature, which was prone to betray a tendency to grasp rather firmly the things of the earth, was softened and elevated by the love of God in the heart, and the grace of God in the life.

The Rev. Robert Troup, late of St. Andrews, gives the following narrative of the early years of his brother, including some features in the character of his parents, which were reproduced in the son:—

"At the time of the birth of James his father was a retired merchant, living on money he had

made in business, and on the produce of several acres of land. He had been born in poverty, but had pushed his way to what was considered affluence in this small, plain-living community. Left fatherless at the age of ten, he had from that time forward to take his part in earning bread for the household. He was taught to read at home, and had no other schooling except a single quarter at the parish school, which he attended for the purpose of learning to write, and gain a little knowledge of arithmetic. One of the first uses to which he put his pen deserves mention. His morning work in winter was to thrash so much corn daily. Having a very poor memory he found the learning of the Shorter Catechism a hard task. But he succeeded by adopting this plan:—Writing out two questions with their respective answers on a slip of paper, he pinned them to the barn door. In the breathing time between removing one lot of sheaves and bringing forward another he read a question and answer two or three times, and then conned them over while thrashing the next fill of the floor, and thus until he had mastered the whole.

"He was equally persevering a little later in learning a trade. Having occasion to go to Aberdeen once a month to assist a carrier, he spent every moment he could spare in a carpen-

ter's workshop watching the operations of the men, and when he went home he did his best to imitate them with a few tools which he had procured. He thus acquired considerable skill, and gradually won his way to a large share of the carpenter trade of the district. In course of time he added a merchant's store to his carpenter's shop, the sales being mostly made by his younger sister, who was so frank and affable, and had such a fund of kindly and homely humour, that she became universally popular. It was on her marriage and removal to Huntly that he retired from business and gave his time henceforth to the cultivation of his land. He was a steady, upright, humble, kindly, godly, man, 'swift to hear, slow to speak.' For many years he was the chief support of the Congregational Church in Rhynie, being deacon, treasurer, and beadle—an unpaid beadle, and not only unpaid, but often making up the deficiences of the minister's small salary out of his own pocket. Nor did his help to the church end there. Having built a new house about the year 1826, he for several years left the upper story of it open from end to end for the use of the congregation; and when in 1829 they were able to erect a new chapel, he fitted up the half of the same story for meetings, and during the next quarter of a century it was known as Robert

Troup's Hall, or simply 'The Hall,' and was used for the Sunday School, the Bible Class, prayer meetings, temperance meetings, and such like. In his old age he built another and better hall on ground adjoining the chapel, and handed it over to the church for its own use. His gifts were not confined to the church. It was chiefly through him, and mainly at his expense, that a good supply of water was first brought into the village. He had, moreover, a prophet's chamber in his house, which was free along with a free table to any minister, missionary, or evangelist, visiting the district, and it was seldom long unoccupied. He had also a beggar's chamber, and many a poor wanderer found a refuge in it for the night, followed by a substantial breakfast in the morning. His hand was likewise open for those who were struggling with financial difficulties, and relief was often readily given either by gift or by loan. There was never a word of boasting about any of these things. He scarcely even talked of them. He simply did them. Can it be doubted that, when his son James acted in the same way in another sphere, the example of the father had contributed to the formation of this part of his character? The influence was silent, but none the less effective on one who had an innate disposition in the same direction, and who in his childhood and youth saw so much of its quiet outcome.

"His mother, Jane Cran of Lesmore, was a woman of rare excellence—humble, devout, pious, prudent, looking well to the ways of her household. What she said regarding her eldest son would no less express her feeling regarding her youngest, 'I would rather he were a poor man with the grace of God in his heart, even if he should have to beg his bread from door to door, than the richest man in the parish without that grace.' Though she did not live to train him, for she died while he was still an infant of two years, yet some of the most striking features of her character reappeared in him. From his mother as well as from his father he inherited his placid temperament, his humble disposition, his quiet perseverance and steadiness, and his practical kindness—'Love not in word or tongue, but in deed and truth.'

"No one could adequately fill her place, and do her work as a mother. But it might be filled in part. There are some, who, though they never bear children, yet are true mothers. They have the motherly instinct, and heart, and touch. If the opportunity comes to them, they show motherly love, kindness, tenderness, tact, helpfulness. Such was Mary Smith, the servant and housekeeper, who came into this family after the mother's death, and took charge of the bereaved children. She was devoted to these motherless

ones, especially to the helpless infant. She saw to his welfare in every way, and as the years passed she had the satisfaction of seeing the work of her hands prosper to a degree she had little expected. For all the boys were well settled in life, two of them in the ministry, before she was called to her reward above, and they all did what they could to manifest their gratitude to her.

CHAPTER II.

SCHOOL DAYS.

"THE first school to which he went was the Sunday School. The teacher who appears to have had most influence on James was a day labourer, who, having a large young family, had a hard struggle to keep them in bread and butter. The butter indeed, it is to be feared, was generally lacking, and the bread often a dry crust. But he was a man of Christian intelligence, lively manner, genial disposition, and had the gift of interesting his scholars more than many who are equipped with all the appliances with which Sunday School teachers are now so amply furnished.

"One of the memorable events of James's early school days, which was afterwards repeated

annually, was a visit to Portsoy for sea bathing. For a week or two it was looked forward to, by James and his two brothers, with eager expectation, and on the evening of the day before the journey, when several iron rods, each bent into a half circle, were fitted into sockets in a cart, and a canvas sheet thrown over them, so as to make a temporary travelling tent or caravan, the excitement rose to its height. Early next morning a sack filled with straw was placed across the middle of the cart for seats, luggage stowed away here and there, and a start made amid the greatest glee, the boys being ensconced under the tent, and rejoicing in the unwonted mode of travelling. After nine or ten hours on the road the sea was descried with new wonder each season, and next day the eager children were down at the shore as soon as permission was granted, climbing the rocks, searching the clear pools which the ebb-tide had left, watching the tiny fishes as they darted from side to side, laughing at the curious motion of the crabs, gathering shells and marine plants, and enjoying the other delights of the new world thus opened up to them. But bathing was not the only remedy taken by those who resorted to the coast sixty years ago. Another part of the treatment was a cup of sea-water drunk before breakfast every second morning. To James this was no

trouble. While the others, young and old, with wry faces gulped the nauseous draught as quickly as possible, he took his share deliberately, eating a slice of bread, and sipping the salt water as if it had been a cup of tea, to all appearance with pleasure. In after days he was often reminded of this, much to his own amusement.

"His treatment of another kind of medicine on one occasion afforded him yet more amusement, when recalled by him. A lady of great influence in the district, a frequent visitor at his father's house, called one day, and found the boy ill and in bed, and the housekeeper with a spoonful of castor oil in her hand, which she was in vain coaxing him to drink. 'Give it to me, Mary,' said the lady, 'I'm sure he'll take it from my hands. Accordingly he did take it. Now, Mary, you see how obedient he is to me,' was the next remark. But the obedience was only skin-deep. No sooner had the lady left the apartment, than all the contents of the spoon were deposited on the floor. He had actually held them all the time in his mouth! Happily, he soon recovered notwithstanding this summary rejection of the medicine, and had many a laugh over it in subsequent days.

"This lady had medicine of another and yet more distasteful kind, which she sometimes administered. For example, she went on one

occasion to address the Sunday School, in which James was a scholar. Her chair was placed at one end of the hall, the class to which James belonged was ranged on her left side, and he being at the top of the class sat next to her. He was listening attentively, his elbow on his knee, his hand with his Bible in it under his chin. The subject probably was human depravity, for, suddenly turning to James, she said, 'James, do you know that you are a child of the devil, and that you are going to hell?' James sat impassive, not moving a muscle of his face, but much wondering no doubt at his strange case—born of a father whose goodness he well knew, of a mother whose piety he had often heard of, himself living without any special stain or reproach, and yet by this good lady pronounced before the whole school to belong to the devil, to be doomed to hell. Such was the austere theology common in those days. And yet this lady was one of the best of Christians. She had suffered persecution for Christ's sake, she was devoted to His service—loving, kind-hearted and practically benevolent, as well as earnest and faithful. But her religion in its aspect towards the world had more terror in it than attractiveness, more of the wrath of God than of His unspeakable love.

"When James was eleven or twelve years of

age, the controversy, which issued in the formation of the Free Church, rose to its height in Rhynie, one of the parishes of Strathbogie. Its minister was suspended for disobeying the supreme court of the Church, and the minister of another parish appointed to preach in his place. On the morning of a cold Sunday in the spring of 1841, James saw a small group of people gathered round the 'stannin' stanes' on the square of the village, and heard the voice of a preacher come sounding down the street. Drawn by curiosity, he approached the group. The wind was coming in fitful gusts, and lifting dust and bits of straw and some dry snow, of which there was a sprinkling on the ground, and whirling them about; the people were shivering, but listening with set faces and anxious hearts. This gathering was the first visible sign in the parish of the memorable conflict. The preacher had been sent by the General Assembly; but, having been interdicted by the Court of Session from entering the Parish Church, he stood there right in front of it to proclaim the suspension of the minister, and also to preach the gospel of grace and the headship of Christ.

"Another incident connected with the same conflict made no little impression on his mind. He and his two brothers with several friends

started about five one summer morning to spend a day in the upper part of the parish. As they proceeded along the road, a little outside the village they noticed a number of carpenters, with saws and axes over their shoulders, crossing a moor close by. When they returned in the evening a good-sized wooden church stood complete before their astonished gaze on a spot which had been empty when they passed in the morning. It seemed to have sprung up as if by magic. But there was no magic in it. The carpenters had done it. They had worked hard all day, and this new church was the result. The Non-intrusion Party—as they were then called—wanted a church, a site in the village had been refused by the proprietor, but a farmer had granted them permission to build on this spot. Afraid lest the laird should interdict them, if he learned they were building on his property, they had arranged to put up their church all in one day, so as to be finished before the news could reach his ear, and an interdict be obtained.

"These things dwelt in the boy's memory as he grew up. He found the members and adherents of the Free Church, at the beginning of the movement in his native parish, narrow and bigoted, but he could not help admiring their enthusiasm, and thus was laid the foundation of

that liberality of sentiment on church questions which distinguished him through life. No doubt there were other things which contributed to it. In his father's house it was a maxim often repeated, 'There are good people in all churches.' Nor was this a saying only, it was acted on. Thus the prophet's chamber, already referred to, was open to ministers of all churches—to the Baptist, the Methodist, the Presbyterian, the Episcopalian as readily as to the Congregationalist. Then moreover at school some of James's closest companions belonged to the Established Church; in a society he joined, after leaving school, many of the members were Free Churchmen; at the University two of his most intimate friends were Presbyterians. Under these various influences liberality was a natural growth. And hence that catholicity, which was a marked feature of his character.

"But to return to his school days, his first schoolmaster was the Rev. Robert Duff, a young man fresh from the University, a vigorous, active, pushing and somewhat dashing teacher, who made quite a revolution in education in Rhynie. Under his teaching the scholars at the parish school awoke to a new life and were carried forward with vigour. But he had an imperious temper, and his scholars learned when to expect

outbursts of it. If they saw him issue from his house in white vest and trousers they whispered to each other not without some fear, 'We'll get our pandies the day, the maister has on his fite breeks.' The next teacher, the Rev. George Stuart, was a man of quite a different stamp. He was sober-minded, slow and steady in his methods, but diligent and painstaking to the last degree, faithful and conscientious, fond of his advanced scholars, yet not negligent of the less advanced. His face belied his heart. The former was stern and gloomy, the latter kind and sympathetic. James made steady progress under him. Though never brilliant he was one of his best scholars, and after he left school, especially after he went to the University, he was often held up by Mr. Stuart to successive races of scholars as a model of good conduct, perseverance, and progress.

CHAPTER III.

SELF EDUCATION.

"JAMES remained at school until he had got nearly all it could give him. After leaving it, he was for a time undecided as to his future course, and meanwhile assisted his father in farm work, taking the place of a servant, who had hitherto been employed in this capacity. This occupation, unknown to himself, was educating him for his future ministry. Agriculture may not make a man sharp, clever, nimble, quick; it may have a tendency towards slowness, but it also tends to promote thought and meditation. To spend two or three years at the desk of a lawyer, a banker, or a merchant, may give one that knowledge of business, which no doubt would be of use to a minister in some of the incidental parts of his work, but to spend them in farm operations, if

he is of an observant mind, is to lay up in store that knowledge, and acquire that bent of mind, which in future days will come out in the very essence of his work—in the structure of his thought, and the style of his speech. It brings him into close contact with nature in all her states and moods. And he also gains a knowledge of the feelings and notions and characteristics of the common people, to which one who is simply and only a student is often a stranger. Nor was this the only way in which James's education was now being carried on: he was also a great reader. His father's library was small, but one of the best in the village. There was also a subscription library in the upper part of the parish, about two and a half miles from the village, and many a walk did he take to get books from its well-stored shelves. Its chief contents were history, biography, and general literature. This library was a sort of continuation school for him after he left the parish school, and it opened to his mind a wide door of thought and inquiry.

"One of his chief companions at this time, afterwards his life-long friend, the Rev. G. C. Smith, M.A., narrates an incident, which appears to show the bent of his mind on these early days of his life. Returning together from Druminnor

House, the residence of a neighbouring laird, where the two had gone to obtain the choicest produce of the garden to be used at the Rev. A. Nicoll's ordination, and while passing through a park by a 'near cut,' James abruptly stood still, and laying down his basket yielded himself to what seemed a divine afflatus, and delivered his first missionary address—with a passion and power, which his friend vividly remembers to-day. Into that youthful effort he poured, without hesitation and with emphatic gestures, the treasures he had gathered from the sacred prophets and from the speeches of missionary deputations on their yearly rounds. Many phrases in the address are as freshly remembered as if heard only yesterday, while the speaker made his appeal for 'the sable sons of Africa,' and caught a vision of Ethiopia stretching out her hands to God.'

"There was yet another means of self-education, of which he availed himself. In the year 1846 a friend and neighbour, the Rev. R. Harvey Smith, then beginning his studies for the ministry, called together a few young men, and proposed the formation of a Mutual Instruction Class. The proposal was heartily accepted, and a class formed. An essay, prepared by one of the members of the class, was read at each

weekly meeting, criticism passed upon it, discussion raised, and occasionally a set speech delivered; in this way the young men sought to instruct each other. James Troup was one of the original members of the Rhynie society, and he threw himself heartily into all the work of it. He was the secretary of it during the first year and a half of its existence. And he wrote not a few essays and papers for it, as will be seen by the following list:—'Slavery,' 'The Acquisition of Knowledge,' 'The Earth,' 'Periodical Literature,' 'History,' 'On Writing Essays,' 'Education, 'Self-education,' 'The Advantages of a Female Mutual Instruction Class,' 'The Physical Influence of Climate, 'The United States,' 'Socialism,' 'Analysis,' 'The Structure of the Earth,' 'Language,' 'The Claims of Mind,' 'The Chemistry of the Sunbeam.' These essays and papers show that he must have been thinking out a good many subjects, and were valuable means of self-education. The reading required for the preparation of them, the thought bestowed on them, the composition, the discussions to which they gave rise in the class, the replies to criticisms passed on them—all these things benefited the essayist even more than his hearers and critics. They filled his mind with new ideas, and prepared him for yet higher efforts. 'There is that scattereth and yet increaseth.'"

CHAPTER IV.

THE UNIVERSITY AND THEOLOGICAL HALL.

"IN the year 1847 he resolved to give up agricultural labour, and to resume his classical and mathematical studies with a view to a university education. His father was at first unwilling to give his consent to this change, but a friend whom he consulted said to him, 'Surely, Mr. Troup, it is far better that James should go to college, and get learning, than go to the next market, enlist as a soldier, and get the chance of being shot.' The half-yearly feeing markets were held on the village square, and seldom passed without some of the young men of the district accepting the Queen's shilling and entering the army. His father, after further consideration, gave his full consent to his son's purpose, and he never afterwards regretted it."

James had already acquired some knowledge

of the Latin language while at the parish school, he now renewed his study of it under the guidance of his former teacher, Mr. Stuart, and after a few months of his tuition he went to the Grammar School, Aberdeen, then under the rectorship of the famous Dr. Melvin. It was indeed a great privilege to be in the class of such a distinguished Latinist as Melvin. For general accuracy as a scholar, especially in his mastery of Latin, and the classical purity of his composition in that language, he had not his superior in Scotland. A man who had been under Melvin, and who secured his approbation, possessed the "hall mark" of scholarship in the eyes of all competent to judge.

It may be taken as conclusive evidence that he had profited by the prelections of Dr. Melvin, when it is mentioned that in going up to the University competition at Aberdeen, in October, 1848, he had the honour of taking the second bursary. It was no small distinction, indeed, to carry away such a prize when we remember the number of keen-witted competitors who were around him from all parts of the country.

We here return to his brother's narrative:—

"There was," he says, "much rejoicing among his friends in Rhynie when the news of his success reached the little village. Mr. Stuart, his former teacher, was specially delighted, as one who shared the honour gained by his scholar; and the school broke up with the greatest glee, the scholars shouting and throwing their caps in the air, for a holiday was given them in recognition of the event.

"But the joy among his friends was speedily turned into anxiety; for the next news that reached them was that the Rhynie Bursar was prostrated by typhus fever of a virulent type. For a week or two he was delirious, and hung between life and death, but in the good providence of God the fever abated, and his health was restored. He had, however, to return home for the winter, as he was too weak to go forward to the classes of that session. Next year he returned to Aberdeen, passed through the usual Arts course, stood well in all his classes, gained several prizes, and graduated in 1853. As a student he was not a specialist. He made it his aim to give as much attention as possible to all the branches of the regular course. He thus left the University without the *eclat* which sorrounds those who gain the two or three great prizes, but

with the reputation of being one of the best general scholars of his time.

"The help he gave to a friend, who went in for one of these prizes, led to an amusing result. This friend, the Rev. W. Findlay, M.A., of Larkhall, was behindhand in preparation for the Moral Philosophy examination, and after the competition for the special prize he was so exhausted in body and mind that he had little strength and less inclination for revision during the one evening that now remained for it. James, knowing how the case stood, invited him to his room, and read his notes of lectures to him, and they discussed together the more important and difficult points. When the list came out the friend stood first, and James fifth. Not a trace of envy did he show, but cordially congratulated his successful rival. Many a laugh did the two have in after days on the folly of rendering such generous help!

"The teaching of philosophy in Aberdeen was very defective at that time, therefore he went next session to Edinburgh, chiefly for the sake of attending the class of Sir William Hamilton, the eminent philosopher. Sir William was by this time unable through failing health to teach his class personally, but his lectures were read, and his class conducted, by an able assistant, Mr.

Baynes, afterwards Professor of Logic and English Literature in the University of St. Andrews, and editor of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*."

He had interesting reminiscences to give of the days he spent in the quaint, old-world place, of which King's College is the centre. At that time most of the students lived in Old Aberdeen, and from the accounts he gave, some of them had an environment which was a striking illustration of the combination of the plain living and high thinking which are said to characterise the cultivation of learning in Scotland. Two men often ate, slept, and studied in one little room. With the help of the boxes of butter and eggs, and an occasional bag of oatmeal or potatoes, which came from home, a student from the country would meet class fees and lodging for the session for little more than twenty pounds. But those aspirants to academic culture had youth and health and contentment on their side, and the experiences, which some would call hardships, were only so much wholesome discipline which helped to make them the men most of them became.

"During those five years, James spent the summer months at home in quiet reading and study, varied by visits to friends, by work done for the Mutual Instruction Class, and by walking excursions through several parts of the Highlands. In these excursions he was accompanied by two friends — James Macdonald, Huntly, who, after a successful career in business, and after attaining considerable reputation in the investigation of place names, predeceased him by only three months; and John Macdonald, a younger brother of Dr. George Macdonald, who showed much of the same genius as his brother, but died in early life. These walking excursions, full of interest and excitement, and sometimes of adventure, afforded a fund of pleasant reminiscences, and in after years he used often to talk of them. One incident we have heard him again and again narrate. The three travellers, one evening after a day's journey, found, while thirty miles from home, that their money was all but exhausted. They could not pay for a night's lodgings, and they resolved at once to set out for home. Having a few coppers left, they bought some bread and started, passing across country, over hill and valley, until about one in the morning they reached a graveyard some eight miles from Rhynie. Wearied and

hungry they sat down on some gravestones, partook of their provisions, and then stretched themselves on the grass to snatch an hour or two of sleep. But John Macdonald was in the highest spirits, and kept up such a fire of quips and cranks, and told such weird stories, that sleep was impossible. Remonstrance was in vain. The outflow of humour could not be repressed. Very soon therefore they started up and pursued their journey again, and reached Rhynie as workmen from the village were proceeding to their early labours in the country around. These men gazed with no little astonishment at the dust-covered travellers arriving at such an hour evidently from a long and weary journey; while they themselves learned from their experience on this occasion a lesson which they never forgot—to look well to their 'ways and means' before starting on such excursions again.

"It was about this period—amid this intellectual activity, and kindly social life, that James gradually received full spiritual illumination and elevation, and made full surrender to Christ, and dedicated his life to the work of the Christian ministry. Though the precise time and the various steps are now unknown, the chief means and agencies which led him on are not unknown. The influence of his father's Christian character

was constantly telling upon him all through his childhood and youth. There are clocks which do not strike, but they keep and show true time: it is ever visible on their face. You have but to look and you see it. Such was his father. He never preached a sermon, never gave an address at a religious meeting, rarely spoke to his sons on religious subjects even in private, but he lived a true Christian life. His life was a silent but impressive sermon. One daily habit of his had an especial influence on his children, not that the habit itself was peculiar to him, but because of the manner and place in which it was carried out. Although, as mentioned in a previous chapter, he had given up working as a carpenter for the public, he retained and still used part of his workshop, to which his children had free access, and the use of some of the tools. But there was one part of the day when it was inaccessible to them, about eight in the morning. The door was locked from the inside, and no sound could be heard either of hammer or axe, saw or plane. This hour was his time of private devotion. This workshop was his closet, where with shut door he prayed to his Father in secret. When this was told to the children an awe fell upon their spirit, and they often thought, with veneration, of their earthly father kneeling amid

shavings, boards, and tools, and speaking to their Heavenly Father. Formerly they had sometimes been tempted to try to push open the door, or knock at it violently. Now they passed it in silence and reverence. It was one of the quiet influences which in later years bore fruit in James. In 1841 a young preacher, Mr. Forrester, who lived in his father's house for a couple of months, invited him to his room occasionally to have a quiet talk with him concerning spiritual things, and to encourage him in the pursuit of truth. When he was in his thirteenth year a series of evangelistic meetings was held in the village. Several young people received new light and new life at these meetings. He also was interested and touched, and what was good in him confirmed. The Rev. A. Nicoll had now become his minister, and for the next few months lived in his father's house, and came into daily contact with him. This man was just the minister for the place and the people. He had a clear conception of evangelical truth, a lucid and sometimes original manner of preaching, much insight into character, and whether dealing with individuals, or addressing a congregation, used great plainess and faithfulness of speech. It was under his ministry, both private and public, as following up these previous influences,

that James Troup attained to clear knowledge of gospel truth, and was led to thorough consecration to Christ.

"It may be added here that in his subsequent ministry down to the last days of it he never forgot those, who, it might be unknown to their fellow-men, were passing through a similar experience. He often spoke of them sympathetically both in his prayers and in his sermons.

"In the year 1854 he applied for admission to New College, London, one of the Theological Halls of the English Congregationalists, in order that he might study for the ministry. He had already been working for the Master. For some time it had been his habit to invite one or other of his young friends to spend an hour or two with him on a convenient evening, and have a conversation on some spiritual subject; at least the conversation generally turned in that direction before the close. One friend, now a deacon in a Congregational Church, recalls not a few conversations of this kind, and tells how they would go on talking thus for a considerable time, now turning to a passage of scripture, and now speaking of spiritual aspirations or experiences, and generally closing by kneeling together in prayer; and how he often felt lifted up by these conversations, and was much helped in his

Christian course. 'One of the missions of the poet,' according to Wordsworth, is 'to add sunshine to the daylight.' There are some who are not poets, and yet in their presence, and by a subtle influence flowing from them, thought becomes brighter, feeling stronger, and the soul is elevated and vivified. So it was with some of his young friends in the company of James Troup.

"His course at New College may be told in very few words. It was of a piece with all that had proceeded it—a course of quiet, steady, progress. Here, as in the University, he took a good place in all his classes. There was no skirking of any part of his work. He gave conscientious attention to it all. The result became manifest at the close of his course, when he was bracketed with the Rev. F. S. Turner, B.A., as gaining the Selwyn Prize—the chief prize then given to a student who was about to leave the College after finishing his studies.

"In addition to his college studies, James also received no little benefit from some of the great preachers of London. F. D. Maurice was still proclaiming Christ, in Lincoln's Inn Chapel, as the King of all mankind. T. Binney was still exercising a commanding influence on intelligent young men. T. T. Lynch was

drawing a small company of thoughtful men and women to hear his strikingly fresh sermons. And C. H. Spurgeon was already, by his eloquence, attracting vast crowds to Exeter Hall and Surrey Music Hall. And James could appreciate all these. But the one he most delighted in and profited by was Samuel Martin. In his preaching there was at once simplicity and power, fervour and pathos, winsomeness and faithfulness. As often as possible this Scotch student bent his steps to Westminster Chapel, and made one of the large congregation which then assembled there.

"A good many of his fellow-students are still living, and they bear testimony with one voice to the worth of his character at New College, the maturity of his judgment, his modesty, his genial and cheerful disposition, his ever ready and ungrudging helpfulness. Thus to give a quotation from a letter of the Rev. J. C. Fox, Wingham Vicarage, Kent:—'I little thought last time I called on him that he was so soon to be translated, and called away into the presence of the 'King.' Happy for him! But a sore bereavement for his people, and friends, and me! At college he was my mentor and *fidus Achates*. In gravity and staidness there was something fatherly about him, distinguishing him from the

rest of us, or most of us, who were inclined to be over giddy and gay sometimes, but with all his gravity there was ever the free and ready smile, and in relaxation from severer studies a childlike openness to receive impressions of delight, and the twinkling light of humour in his eye; and no laughter, when it was right and seasonable, was heartier and brighter than his. 'The white flower of a blameless life' he always wore. And as a student he was a model to us. His zeal in Hebrew studies afterwards stimulated me to a fondness for what at first had been a distasteful and repugnant task.'

"The Rev. G. T. Coster also writes:—'My memory of him, as he then was, is of a man who never said or did a foolish thing, of a quiet devout man, an influence of silent goodness among us all. If there was one to whom I could turn for a word of wise counsel and encouragement it was James Troup.' And again:—'He was a good man, whose very silence was vocal, and whose faithfulness, as I once or twice experienced, was true and helpful friendliness.'"

CHAPTER V.

BEGINNING WORK IN HELENSBURGH.

HELENSBURGH lies on the Clyde, opposite Greenock, on an extensive slope which is sunned all the day long. From most of its houses, which rise in tiers, you can have an interesting view of the further shore and the river with its ships between; while, if you climb the Luss Road until you reach a higher level, you are rewarded for your pains, if the day be clear, with glimpses of the Alpine-like Arran mountains, rearing themselves as noble sentinels of the magnificent estuary of the Clyde. Helensburgh, in its general appearance, has quite a character of its own, and persons who have travelled far often observe that they have been in few places which from natural situation and general plan

leave upon the mind such a distinct and pleasing impression. Its regular and wide streets, abundantly planted with trees, and the open cultivated spaces attached to the houses, evidently occupied by persons who have a fair proportion of this world's good things, give it a green, grassy, garden-like aspect, which, with the quiet that reigns in its upper parts, makes the visitor uncertain whether he is in town or country.

Before Helensburgh as now known existed, and it was little more than an insignificant village lining the shore, it had a Congregational Church, the first of the many large and prosperous churches of various denominations planted within its borders. The origin of Congregationalism was identified with a revival movement throughout the land, at the beginning of the century, and at that time churches of our order often came into existence as spiritual affinity or clamant need imposed. The founders of Scottish Congregationalism were not far-seeing, worldly-wise ecclesiastics, who aimed at rearing a strong denominational interest in the country. They were simple-minded pious folk who drew near to each

other as they had drawn near to the Lord, and desired, as a fellowship, to be named by His name.

In such circumstances, the few brethren of the place, with the help of persons at a distance, such as the Haldanes and their coadjutors, laid the foundations of Congregationalism in Helensburgh. It was essentially a Gospel enterprise, bent upon the spiritual edification of the flock and the conversion of sinners, the Congregationalism being little more than an accident, at most no more than a sheath for the sword.

After a number of changes and trying experiences, the Rev. John Arthur began what proved to be a long and successful ministry. During this time the church was greatly strengthened by the exodus of Glasgow merchants and others to the coast, no place being more favoured in that respect than Helensburgh. A number of Independents from Glasgow, particularly from Dr. Wardlaw's church, were transferred to Mr. Arthur's ministry, and again and again had the congregation to lengthen its cords and strengthen its stakes.

After many years of faithful service, Mr.

Arthur needed a colleague, and James Troup, in 1858, was chosen as the person for that post. A joint-pastorate is an arrangement that is often found to have difficulties as well as advantages. It is not easy for a man who has had the attention and affection of a congregation for many years to see another gradually taking his place, which is inevitable if the colleague is prospective successor as well. It requires a considerable amount of self-effacement for the sake of the cause, which every good man cannot rise to. Of this we may be sure, that in the colleagueship which existed for about five years in the Congregational Church in Helensburgh, the friction, if any, must have been reduced to a very minimum, for no one could be more self-forgetful and conciliatory than James Troup.

There is one feature in Mr. Troup's work which has been noticeable from the beginning to the end of it, and that is its catholicity. While an Independent by birth and conviction, he was above all things a Christian minister who was willing to work with all who were prepared to work with him for the common Lord and Master.

It cannot be denied that an Evangelical ministry when consistent with itself in spirit and method is the broadest of all. Just as all writings which reflect with greatest fidelity and fulness the New Testament have a marked catholicity, and in reading what Matthew Henry, Archbishop Leighton, Howe, Baxter, and Bunyan wrote you never think of what is sectional, but of what is vital and central; so the more imbued men are with the spirit of the New Testament, the more do they present that which joins them to other Christians.

We introduce the testimony of Mr. Geo. Maclachlan, town-clerk of Helensburgh, a leading member in the church, and a warm personal friend of Mr Troup:—

"There are no striking incidents in the history of his ministry here. Indeed there are generally in the lives of country pastors few such incidents. As a rule the story of one week is like another, and the events which break the monotony of the routine of city life are few. Not that the life is other than a busy one, and often an anxious one, with few spare hours of leisure. There is visitation of the sick and aged, preparation for pulpit and prayer meeting and Bible-class, frequent

demands on time for public duties, platform appearances, social and literary engagements, which leave small margin for leisure.

"From the time Mr. Troup settled here until his work suddenly closed, though he never had the appearance of a busy man, he had a diversified and constant round of duty to fulfil. He had on Sabbath two and sometimes three services, and generally at their close his class. During the earlier part of his ministry, he frequently engaged, in conjunction with the Rev. Mr. Anderson of the Free Church, in open-air service in the evening. He took a deep interest in the early history of a local Y.M.C.A., and frequently addressed their meetings on Sabbath mornings, and was also a promoter and director of an Evangelistic Association which accomplished good results amongst a class of non-church goers. In addition he often acceptably lectured to local literary associations on subjects of popular interest. It may be said he never refused to comply with any demand made on his time or talents if he could at all meet it, and yet his serene and equable disposition was such that under the pressure of manifold engagements he never was in haste or worried. He was always calm; no one can recall an irritable or hasty expression from his lips. But his calmness was not, as is often

the case, a ponderous solemnity, for though he did not often venture on a joke, he had a keen appreciation of humour, and few men more enjoyed a droll saying."

CHAPTER VI.

CALL TO LERWICK.

IN 1865, James Troup passed from the balmy shores of the Clyde to the remote islands swept by the North Sea, and there did a work not only as pastor of the Congregational Church of Lerwick, but as a sort of "Bishop of the Isles," which will not be soon forgotten. It has often been matter of surprise to friends within as well as outside our denomination that, having only about a hundred churches in the whole of Scotland, we should have so many of them in Shetland, and should spend such a large proportion of our resources upon them.

The explanation is to be found in the fact already stated that early in the century churches

sprang up just as little knots of people here and there, under the preaching of James Haldane and others, came to accept our principles and seek our fellowship. Having come into existence, we have all along felt that we were bound to contribute to their support, and it was to organise help to them and similar churches in other parts of the land that the "Congregational Union" was formed.

During the brief pastorate of Mr Troup, the Lerwick Church was strong and helpful to all in our fellowship in Shetland. The church received a great influx of prosperity during his connection with it. Not only was the membership increased, but so much was Mr Troup's preaching appreciated that many of the leading men of the town came frequently as hearers. The writer, having been in Lerwick as a visitor shortly before the call came to Mr Troup to return to Helensburgh, can testify to the reverence and affection in which he was held by the people of that town and other parts of Shetland.

The Rev. H. Booth Aldridge, now pastor of the Lerwick Church, writes thus regarding the

impression Mr. Troup's ministry has left upon the minds of the people :—

"Mr. Troup when in Lerwick was beloved by one and all alike inside and outside of his congregation. His removal from the town was at the time most deeply regretted, and regarded by every one as a great loss to his own church and to the district generally. His recent decease has caused sadness to the hearts of his many friends here, with whom his memory will ever be cherished, and his example ever remain as an inspiration."

By his sojourn in Shetland for four or five years the churches and ministers of those islands got a place in his heart which they did not lose by the lapse of time and his return to his former sphere in Helensburgh. When men like Nicholson of Scalloway, Williamson, now of Insch, or any of the Frasers came south they were sure to make a pilgrimage to Helensburgh, where there was hospitable welcome awaiting them.

The Rev. L. Williamson of Insch gives the following as a specimen of the adventures Mr Troup often had while in Shetland :—

"He was on one occasion attending a meeting of the Shetland Association of Congregational

Ministers, of which he was secretary and indeed the moving spirit. The meeting was at Reawick and in the dead of winter. He intended, and was expected, to be in his own pulpit on the following Sabbath, but was detained by stormy weather until late on Saturday afternoon. The weather then broke a little, but not sufficiently to allow of his getting to Lerwick by the shortest and usual route, viz., by boat to Scalloway, a distance of seven miles, and then to walk or drive other seven miles to town. The alternative route involved twenty miles of walking and crossing two arms of the sea. Against the wishes and remonstrances of his friends at Reawick, he started to go by this route when dusk was coming on. The first stage of the journey was accomplished and the first arm of the sea crossed with the last glimmer of daylight. It was now dark, and between him and the next ferry lay three or four miles of hill and dale without even a track, and covered with wild peat moss. Nothing daunted, he called at a cottage and asked if anyone could be got to show him across the hills. A man volunteered to accompany him, and taking a burning peat from the cottage hearth to light their way (a common expedient in Shetland) the two set forth and after many a leap arrived at the second ferry. Having crossed this, he had still twelve miles of walking, which he did all

alone in darkness, arriving in town somewhere about midnight. He never thought of such an adventure as a hardship, and related the story with evident enjoyment. Such adventures, of which he had many in his journeyings through Shetland, seemed to heighten his spirits and give zest to the service he so ungrudgingly rendered to the country churches and ministers. Not Lerwick alone but all the churches and districts in Shetland deeply regretted his removal."

CHAPTER VII.

RETURN TO HELENSBURGH.

ON the retirement, owing to poor health, of the Rev. Wm. Milne, who had succeeded the Rev. John Arthur, our friend was invited, in 1869, to come back to Helensburgh to take the sole responsibility of the pastorate. It seldom happens that a minister has such an experience as thus befell James Troup, and still more seldom that it is followed by such happy results. But no one can survey the work that was done in the Congregational Church, during the quarter of a century and more which intervened between the return to Helensburgh in 1869 and the death in 1897, without feeling that the arrangement which held during those years had the sanction and smile of Providence.

During all that time there was faithful witnessing for Christ in the preaching of the Word to a congregation that was edified, and there was a Christian influence diffused throughout the community by the life the Congregational pastor lived, and the work of a general kind which he did in connection with the Noon-day Prayer Meeting, the Young Men's Christian Association, the Evangelistic Association, the Town Mission, and other religious agencies in the town, which ever found in him an unfailing supporter. A friend in the town says :—

"Indeed in a very special manner was he connected with the Evangelistic Assocation, of which he was president for a long number of years, regularly attending the business meeting of the executive and in other ways forwarding the society's interests. Again, from the start of the Noon-day Prayer Meeting, more than a decade ago, Mr. Troup had entire control of the arrangements, and how admirable these have always been the many persons—drawn from all denominations—who regularly attended well know."

There are no persons in Helensburgh more willing to recognise with grateful appreciation Mr. Troup's untiring labours outside his own congre-

gation than his fellow Christian ministers of all denominations.

We bring in here another part of the testimony of Mr. Geo. Maclachlan :—

"It is almost superfluous to refer to his consistent support of temperance or rather of total abstinence. He was a total abstainer from early youth. We have heard him say he never tasted whisky in his life, and knew nothing personally of the effects of strong liquor. Strong and healthy, he was in himself an object lesson of the value of total abstinence.

"He had large sympathy for the sick and poor, and was one of the originators, and all along a director, of a local society for relief of the deserving poor and suffering outside of the regular poor receiving parochial relief. This society has been helpful to many in providing timely relief and aid which they would not probably have received from any other source.

"In private he was always genial. Alike to rich and poor his manner was kindly and sympathetic. Even outside of his own flock he was a universal favourite, and to-day there are many who mourn the loss of his familiar and kindly greeting, and who feel that his place will not easily, if ever, to them be filled up here.

"During his ministry there were several

seasons of revival and religious awakening in the town. In these he took not only a deep interest but a large share, and endeavoured to follow up by prayer and address impressions which had been made on the hearts of the careless."

In corroborating the last paragraph of Mr. Maclachlan's testimony, a Presbyterian friend says that the Congregational Church was more than any other church in town a centre of evangelistic effort. Dr. Pentecost, Mr. Merton Smith, and others held their meetings in that place.

In 1884, the congregation became so large and prosperous that the very handsome Gothic place of worship now in use was built, the former building being allowed to remain alongside to be of service for meetings. The weekly prayer meeting, which is held in the latter place, has ever been much relished by those who took advantage of it, for in it Mr. Troup often showed himself at his best, and his prayers—so fervid and varied, so child-like in supplication, and suited in the petitions presented to the circumstances of the people—revealed the devotional power and habit of the man.

In connection with the opening of the new

place of worship, a social meeting was held on 28th May, 1884, at which the Revs. D. Russell, Glasgow, J. M. Jarvie, Greenock, and other friends were present. In the name of the ladies of the congregation, Mr. Maclachlan presented to the pastor a handsome easy chair and a pocket book containing a cheque for £130, as "a free voluntary gift of the congregation."

Nor must we forget to mention the use that was made of the manse during those years. Not the least important of the duties which the inmate honourably discharged was that of host. Was ever manse more hospitable and "elastic" than that of the Helensburgh Congregational Church? There are some still living who will not soon forget the fellowship enjoyed within the walls of that house. The manse had an air of Sabbatic quiet in which there was no dulness: in it there was liveliness without levity, piety without sanctimonious parade, culture combined with child-like humility.

No one could be less like the "crusty old bachelor" than Mr. Troup. Children felt at home in his presence. On seeing his face beam-

ing upon young people, one could not help thinking what a father he would have been.

He set at defiance all the time-worn gibes about the hardness of Aberdonians, and was a living example of the possibility of a man coming from the land of granite without having in his soul any of the properties which it is said to symbolise.

The following letter from the Rev. W. H. Carslaw, M.A., the minister in Helensburgh who had been longest associated with Mr. Troup, comes in fittingly here :—

"In response to your request, I shall gladly put down in a few sentences my impression of Mr. Troup as a brother minister in the same town. I need scarcely say that he was a man of simple faith, intelligent views, and devout generous spirit. Deeply interested in every movement that affected the welfare of the community, he was always willing to shew his interest in a practical way. With clearly defined convictions of truth and duty, no one was more ready to defer to the wishes and feelings of his ministerial brethren, and thus he often succeeded in gaining his end where a more self-assertive spirit would have failed. From his ecclesiastical position,

combined with his peaceable character, he was also a bond of union among us, constraining us to work more harmoniously together than otherwise we might have done. During the thirty years he and I were closely associated, there was never the slightest difference between us, and to me he was always a wise counsellor and a faithful and generous friend. In my family, too, he took the deepest interest, always asking for them when from home and often lending them books to help them in their studies. One of my sons, whose University career at Glasgow and Cambridge interested him much, writing from Germany remarks, 'I cannot say how shocked I was to hear of Mr. Troup's so sudden death. He stands out in my memories of Helensburgh days as always so kind and good, taking an interest in us all and in all our little things that seemed so important to us. Many people must have found their life easier through him.' I shall only add that, like one of Robert Browning's principal characters, 'he was a friend-making, everywhere friend-finding soul, therefore the sunshine followed him.' Nay, he brought it with him wherever he came, and in many homes, by his genial presence and by his words of grace and consolation, he turned darkness into light."

CHAPTER VIII.

ON HOLIDAY.

IT is said we never know a man till we travel with him, and certainly when one is on holiday the light is not usually kept under a bushel. No person could enjoy a holiday with more zest than James Troup. While not compromising the gravity of the man and the dignity of the Christian minister, he made those in his company feel that the boy still lived in the man.

Helensburgh being a convenient centre, many of Mr Troup's friends came to it when on holiday, and he was ever ready to spend a day with them on the Clyde when that was consistent with other duties. Last year the members of the Home Reading Union selected Helensburgh as their point of departure for their summer tours,

and on more than one occasion he acted as their guide. A few days before his death he was assisting in making arrangements for the second visit of those persons, many of whom are teachers in England.

Every autumn, as a rule, and sometimes in early summer, he visited his native place, Rhynie, and revived his interest in old scenes and friends. Now and again he had a more protracted period of rest, and on one of those occasions the writer had a six weeks' cruise with him on the Mediterranean. He was a most helpful companion, as little inconveniences and the severest storms were ever turned to account as material for so much pleasantry. He owed some of this evenness and unruffled geniality of temper to a splendid constitution, which was proof against the rebuffs of the "chopping" seas through which we sometimes sailed. Among our forty fellow-passengers he was the best "sailor" on board, and when crossing the Bay of Biscay and the Gulf of Lyons he was one of the very select number who presented themselves at table.

His remarkable endurance had its advantages

to others besides himself, for when the other minister present was in a state, on one or two Sundays, which made it impossible that he could do other than take ministration rather than give it, Mr. Troup was able to preach to the few who were gathered for worship in the saloon. He never refused an opportunity of holding forth the Word on board ship or anywhere else. He preached twice in the Presbyterian Church in Genoa, and he had with him during the whole of our holiday a plentiful supply of well-selected religious tracts and books, which he gave away at fitting times.

While our ship was lying at Naples we had an amusing adventure which our fellow-passengers did not allow as to forget. It was proposed by some in the saloon that we should go on shore to catch a certain train for Pompeii. We were the last to decide to go. When we reached the landing we found that all the best cabs were away, and that the only one left was a frail and rather disreputable-looking vehicle, with a very young driver and a very elderly horse. Submitting to the inevitable, we jumped into the

cab, afraid that we might be too late for the train. Our fears soon took another form. Our young Jehu, being a lad of pluck, did not relish the idea of being last in the procession of open carriages which were rattling along the streets of Naples, and so he put whip to his poor attenuated horse, determined to pass the others which had started before us. In vain we protested and by sign and shout ordered him to desist. The more we shouted the more he grinned and whipped, evidently thinking that our disapproval was put on for the sake of appearances. At last we headed the procession, to the amazement of our fellow-passengers, who could not understand why two staid Scotch ministers should in the streets of Naples be so anxious to become the observed of all observers as they pushed their way to the front!

CHAPTER IX.

THE PREACHER.

IT is the universal testimony of those accustomed to hear James Troup as a preacher, that they never met one who was to a greater degree the simple and transparent medium of the truth which was being declared. There was such an utter absence of ostentation or self-consciousness of any kind, such evident sincerity and unaffected seriousness in setting forth the truth that the congregation, while listening, thought not of the man before them, but of Him whose messenger and mouthpiece he was.

An analytical critic would say perhaps that he was more of the teacher than the preacher; but while in the pulpit he often had the matter of the teacher, he always had the feeling, the tone,

the subdued fervour of the preacher. He delighted in opening up the Scriptures, "lecturing," not in microscopic, but in large and comprehensive fashion. He excelled in handling Scripture characters, striking historical or biographical passages which often made what is most familiar in the Bible living and interesting.

In his preaching he was ever the scholar, the Christian expositor more than the orator. He had not the vehemence, the passion or natural fire which enables a man to throw himself upon an audience like an avalanche. Every man in his own order; and that was not his. But for the purposes of solid instruction and spiritual quickening, his quiet yet often solemnly-uttered statements of divine truth were felt to be helpful by those who went to church to be fed, not dazzled. He was ever experimental: you felt he was speaking of things which he had seen and heard, and was not telling other men's visions. At the same time he enriched his discourses with the thought and learning of saintly men, whose works he had in his magnificent library, which was the accumulation of a life-time, and was a

spring that fed many streams besides the one which flowed from the Helensburgh manse.

James Troup was not a "popular preacher," in the rather degraded sense in which that phrase is sometimes used. He had no attractions for those who liked rhetorical display of the thunder and lightning order. He might be deemed "old fashioned" by others who had an insatiable craving for something novel and sensational. But those who wanted preaching by which the written Word might have the advantage of coming through the living preacher who spoke it with the unction of true feeling, a sermon from him, when he was at his best, was as the dew distilled upon the green herb.

He was severely reticent in speaking of himself and his habits of work, but those who invaded his sanctuary, and were familiar with his ways, were well aware that he did not spare himself in preparation for the pulpit. He up to a few years ago was seldom in bed till after midnight. When the engagements of the day were fulfilled, he used the quietness of night in gathering his thought, and putting it on paper, which it was his practice

to do in preparing for the pulpit. In his prime, and until his health began to give way, he was at pains to retain the interest of his congregation by having specially prepared courses of lectures, which were much appreciated.

The Rev. L. Williamson of Insch enjoyed the privilege of attending the Congregational Church in Lerwick while Mr. Troup was pastor, and thus bears witness to the character of the preaching he heard :—

"His sermons, lectures, and addresses were models of perspicuity and neatness. He never took up a text or a subject but he handled it in such an exhaustive manner, and with such point and pathos and power as to leave nothing to be desired. It always seemed to me as if in his discourses there were nothing redundant and nothing lacking. His scholarly attainments were of no mean order and his reading was very extensive, but his utterances were as far from the pedantic as they could possibly be. I well remember him, after listening to one of my earlier attempts at sermonizing, in which I had no doubt been guilty of employing some big words, in his own gentle, kindly, inoffensive manner giving me a bit of sound advice which I never forgot and from which I hope I have

in some measure profited. The advice was this, to study simplicity of style so that everybody could understand. Big thoughts, he added, did not need big words to utter them."

CHAPTER X.

THE PASTOR.

CONSIDERATE, sympathetic, ready to put himself in the position of another, and to see things from that standpoint, James Troup was evidently called to a work of kindly shepherding; but his methods of pastoral activity were thoroughly characteristic. He was not an adept at that superficial, social kind of visitation which is by some considered necessary to draw out and maintain an interest in the cause of which the minister is the overseer. A regular round of visits in which little more was done than what usually takes place at an afternoon tea was not what he attempted.

But where he was really needed and could be of use, he was sure to be found, if he had been

made aware of the circumstances. At the sick-bed, in the bereaved home, when shadow or trouble of any kind came, the pastor, true to the instincts of his heart, was present as a comforter and counsellor. He was thoughtful in his attentions, and if he heard of a youth about to leave the place, he would call and in his own cheery way, without the person knowing he was getting advice, utter a few weighty words which would be pondered, and perhaps leave a book as a parting gift.

He never appeared to be a busy man. His calm deliberate manner sometimes gave the impression that he was a man of leisure. It will be an astonishment to some to learn that he crowded a great deal more into his day's routine than most ministers. There were sick persons he visited regularly two or three times a week, and with whom he read Scripture and prayed. The great day alone will declare the extent of his ministry outside the pulpit as a quiet healer and helper in private.

Power of organisation was not a strong part of his pastoral equipment. He had a great

horror of fuss and mere mechanical arrangement; he had also such faith in the play of spiritual affinity, and the power of life to find a suitable channel for itself, that formal, stated ordinance was reduced to the very minimum in his church. He, like every other man, had, as the French say, "the defects of his qualities," and power of initiative in practical affairs did not belong to him. It was not that he lacked judgment to see what was required, but he was too shy and self-distrustful to marshal the forces at his command. He would rather go and do something needful himself than ask any one to take the trouble of doing it.

He was a believer in the policy of "masterly inactivity," as applied to certain things in life. When friends were rather uneasy at what appeared to them to be foreboding complications, his oft-recurring remark was — "Oh! things will come right if you let them alone, and keep the mind calm." If he erred sometimes in not interposing as a responsible factor, it was certainly never owing to a craven fear of consequences to himself, but from too humble an estimate of his

ability to supply the things which were lacking. Certainly, he was the farthest removed from the busybody who is given to offensive meddlesomeness that one ever met in this world. It may be said that a little less modest backwardness would have been a public advantage; but in human character the presence of some very good and rare things would seem to imply the absence of some other good things more common.

It will be remembered of Mr. Troup's pastorate that the kind of administration in which he excelled was personal succour, that ever came as an offering from the heart of a brother. That was a fine tribute which came from a friend on the way to the grave—"When I had a burden and laid it before him, he took it up, and while he had it I felt it was not mine but his; he looked at it all round, said some things about it, and then when he gave it back to me I felt it was not so big and heavy as before."

CHAPTER XI.

THE DENOMINATIONAL WORKER.

JAMES TROUP by conviction and tradition was a Scottish Independent, and one of the old school who believed that spirituality in the congregation, power in the pulpit, and brotherly fellowship with sister churches which gave effect to itself in practical helpfulness, and not any amount of inflated organisation would make our churches a power in the land. He held it to be inconsistent with the genius of Congregationalism to lay stress upon those things which are an essential part of the structure of ecclesiastical corporations. He ever aimed at deepening the spirituality of the churches, intensifying the friendly feeling which ought to subsist between them, and making the adequate support

of the rural churches the main object of the Congregational Union.

He spent a great deal of time on denominational affairs, and in entrusting any department to him we could always count upon the work being done. He was most regular in his attendance at committees, and his presence was invaluable as he had the judgment and the knowledge to grasp all the details of the situation, and come to a conclusion free from the bias of passion and prejudice; only he was sometimes rather slow in giving the brethren the result of the process which had been going on in his mind. When asked the judgment came, and it was always clear and sagacious. As convener of the "Conference" Committee, the District Committee of the Congregational Union, and the Western Association of Congregational Ministers, his exact and methodical habits were shown for many years to the advantage of all concerned. In 1880 he received the highest denominational honour we could confer upon him, and occupied the chair of the Union. In our denominational gatherings he did not come to the front as a

debater, and, mild man as he was, he did not conceal the opinion that it would not be a loss to the highest interests of the churches if much of the shining on such occasions were to suffer an eclipse, and we were to hear more reports of work done by agents. But if he was not a man of leading and authority amongst us, no one could deny that he had weight and power. The pattering hail does not go so far in as the soaking dew. Many who made far more noise had not a tithe of the influence which he wielded, and which was ever more felt than seen or heard.

Our friend was ever less willing to take the reins than the burden. He never refused to render any service to the churches which lay in the line of his natural aptitude. No one could be more neighbourly and obliging, and if he could render any help to a struggling church it was always given, and few knew of it but the helped. He ever acted upon the principle that the opportunity of doing good implied the obligation to do it, and his deeds and gifts of charity were like flowers we pass on a footpath in the country,

many of which are known to us as we walk only by their fragrance.

He revisited Shetland several times as a denominational helper, and on one of those visits he performed a feat which he did not accomplish during all the years of his residence in Lerwick—he sailed to Foula. Foula is a rugged isle about twenty miles to the west of Shetland. Go to Foula! is a bye-word in Shetland, and the experience of going to it and living on it in those days can quite account for the origin of the malediction! Away out in the Atlantic, beset with fierce currents, beaten with the full charge of every storm which came from the west, and sometimes for three months without communication with the world, it was indeed no isle of the blest.

In visiting Foula with the writer of this tribute to his memory, he went as representing the Congregational Union, to try to heal a breach between the Christian people of that island and the members of our churches throughout Shetland. There was a persistent rumour throughout those regions that our agent there had fallen into

flagrant sin, which appeared to the neighbouring churches to be winked at by those in the island who attended his ministrations. Our business was to make inquiry into the facts of the case, and give such a deliverance on the spot as would tend to bring about a more satisfactory state of feeling.

What made the case more difficult was the circumstance that the person, whose alleged conduct had caused all this estrangement, was dead. When we arrived at "Ham," an inlet of the isle, the only part of the island where a boat can land, the most of the inhabitants were at the shore to welcome us, by each of them heartily shaking hands with us. But some, disappointed at the prospect of an unpleasant question being opened, asked members of our company rather slyly if we had come to "raise the dead!" The hint was thus conveyed that it would have been better to have let the matter alone. But the members and ministers of Shetland would not let it alone, as their complaint was not against an offender who was dead, but against persons still alive who had never disowned his conduct.

It was a solemn scene when we met at night in the chapel really to institute a trial. One of the deputation was appointed chairman, and, after earnest prayer, the ministers who had come with us from Shetland, as requested, stood up one after another and gave evidence which was intended to bring home guilt to the consciences of those of the Foula people who had connived at sin. One after another of the latter rose up in defence, the burden of it being that they could not believe in their hearts that a man who was doing them so much spiritual good had been living in sin.

As the result of the conference an amicable understanding was come to at last largely through the firmness, tact, and weight of character of Mr. James Troup, who was revered by both parties. The scene of that evening meeting in that remote isle, which is said to have been the last refuge of the Norse language in the Shetland isles, often comes up to the memory as a vision of something which had more of heaven than of earth in it. The "Kame" which on an earlier part of the day we climbed, with its more than a thousand feet of

sheer precipice—the grandest rock in Britain, next to that of St. Kilda—its myriads of sea-birds sitting on its ledges or darting and screaming in the air; and the sound of the restless Atlantic heaving and thundering on the rocks far below—have all left a picture of the sublime on the imagination which can never be effaced.

But in what took place that night in the little humble "Baxter Chapel" there was something seen still more sublime. There was a feeble, imperfect, but honest attempt on the part of Christian men to imitate the example of Him who cannot tolerate sin, but is willing to do everything short of compromising righteousness to find a way of reconciliation by which unity and peace may be restored.

A storm arose on the night after we arrived, and we were detained on the island several days beyond the time arranged for leaving. The islanders said Providence had raised the storm to insure for them a good time of Gospel privileges: we had largely attended meetings every day.

CHAPTER XII.

CLOSING DAYS.

THE Rev. Robert Troup, who resided with his brother in Helensburgh for nearly two years, can write of the closing days with the vividness of an eye-witness, and we give his words :—

"For forty-five years, ever since he was prostrated with fever in 1848 until the spring of 1893, Mr. Troup had enjoyed almost perfect health, having never known a headache, and never had to spend a day in bed. But in the latter year a change came. Feeling not so well as usual, he paid a visit to St. Andrews for a fortnight's change, and returned home a good deal recruited. In April he again felt weakly. On Sunday the 16th of that month he conducted the morning service with a good deal of discomfort and

difficulty. In the afternoon he was very sick and ill, and was strongly urged to give up the evening service, but, feeling better as the hour approached, he went out as usual, conducted the devotional part of the service without breaking down, and gave out his text. Immediately on doing so he fainted. As the side of the pulpit was open, he fell down the steps to the platform of the choir, two or three feet lower than the floor of the pulpit. Of course there was great commotion and alarm in the church, and several persons rushed forward to render help. In a few minutes he recovered consciousness, dismissed the congregation, and as soon as possible he was taken home.

"This incident was a danger-signal. It gave indication not only of present weakness within, but also of future peril—that a more permanent breakdown might be expected at no distant date, unless the strain of hard work were relaxed, and great care taken. His doctor therefore prescribed a change of scene, and entire rest for three months. A few friends generously raised a sum of money more than sufficient to defray all expenses, and when he was able to travel, he went to a hydropathic establishment at Harrogate. The treatment there proved of considerable benefit to him. His friend, the Rev. Ninian Wright, was now living in Harrogate, and he was greatly

cheered by daily intercouse with him and his family. After leaving Harrogate he spent a week or two at St. Andrews, then made an excursion to Norway. This excursion did him much good. It was a pleasure from the hour he stepped on board the steamer at Aberdeen until his return; for he knew nothing of sea-sickness, he found congenial society among his fellow-passengers, and he was exceedingly charmed with the scenery of these northern regions—the numerous islands which he passed, the long narrow fiords up which he sailed, some of them hemmed in with high and steep precipices, and the lofty mountains away beyond. He was also greatly interested in the quaint towns and villages, the picturesque dresses of the people, and their curious customs.

"He finished his three months' holiday by spending a short season among his many friends in his native valley of Strathbogie, and also along with three young relatives revisiting a few of the scenes in the Highlands of Aberdeen- and Banff-shires, which had so delighted him in his student days.

"On his return to Helensburgh, he gradually resumed all his former work except the teaching of the Bible-class; but, while much improved by the rest and change, his step was not so firm as before, and it was evident that his 'strength had been weakened in the way,' and he himself was

so far conscious of it that he by and by resolved to retire from the pastorate in the beginning of 1898, when, if spared, he would have finished the fortieth year of his ministry. But the end came sooner than was looked for. The strongest chain is not stronger than its weakest link, nor the strongest man than his weakest vital organ. The vigorous brain cannot say to the feeble heart, 'I have no need of thee.' There was weakness of heart in this otherwise strong man, unknown to many, probably unknown to himself. Hence the end came so unexpectedly. On Sabbath, May 30, 1897, he preached morning and evening with all his usual energy. After supper and prayers he read aloud to his brother and niece for an hour or so, as he was accustomed to do every evening before retiring for the night.

"On Monday he went to Glasgow to see some friends, especially one who was very ill, and in much need of the comfort that comes from a warm heart and cheerful conversation. In the evening he was present at a long meeting of a committee in Helensburgh, held to make arrangements for a religious service on the occasion of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, and, as the senior minister of the town, was appointed chairman for that service. Nearly the whole of Tuesday was given to church committee business in Edinburgh, and he did not get home

until late at night. Wednesday he spent partly in his study, and partly in visiting some of his people. Thursday was spent in the same way. In the evening a friend came to spend the night, Mr. Dallas, whose wife, a niece of Mr. Troup, had kept house for him so long and so faithfully and lovingly. All the circle sat up till late talking together. The conversation was chiefly on scenes and incidents of his early life, and he was particularly interested in telling some of them to his younger friends, and the circle did not break up until nearly midnight.

"At that hour he retired in good spirits, and apparently in good health. About half an hour afterwards, one of the servants was wakened by a sound of loud moaning in his bedroom. She was alarmed, dressed hurriedly, and knocked at his door. On entering she found him breathing very hard and still moaning. She remarked, 'I fear you are very ill, Mr. Troup.' 'Yes, Katie, I am very ill,' was all he was able to reply. He attempted to say more, but was unable. The whole household was now alarmed and gathered round him. He continued to make attempts to speak, but no distinct words came from him except once, when he was heard to say, 'Oh, deal gently.' Talking to a friend about death a few weeks before, he had said that, if he had the choice, he would like to die suddenly.

God gave him his desire in both these respects; for the end was as gentle as it was sudden, the breathing at last so soft that those who stood around could scarcely tell when he passed away. One of his favourite hymns, speaking of the decease of those who on earth live in communion with Christ, gives fitting expression to that which had now taken place:—

'Then Thy companions here
Walking with Thee,
Rise to a higher life,
Soul liberty:
They are not, here to love,
But to the home above,
Taken by Thee.

'Gently translated, they
Pass out of sight,
Gone as the morning stars
Flee with the night:
Taken to endless day,
So may I fade away
Into Thy light.'

"The funeral, which was a public one, took place on the 8th. The services at the manse and the grave were conducted by his more intimate friends; that which was held in the chapel by ministers of nearly all the denominations in the town—the Established Church, the Free Church, the United Presbyterian Church, and the Baptist Church—while the chapel itself

was filled by members of all the congregations and people of all classes. There was deep solemnity, and much sorrow, both in the crowds who lined the streets, and the friends who gathered around the grave, but that sorrow touched and illumined by the glad assurance that the beloved brother, whose mortal remains were laid in the grave, is even now with the Lord, and that, while 'he rests from his labours, his works do follow him.'

"Mr. Troup's character and work were appreciatively and affectionately spoken of in all the churches of the town the Sunday after his death; and on the following Sunday an impressive memorial service was held in the church, in which he had so long ministered, and an appropriate sermon preached by the Rev. A. Cowe, from the words in Acts 11. 24, 'He was a good man.'"

And so for a season we part company with our friend whom to know gave us a higher appreciation of the race to which we belong; and made us feel that Christianity is not an untried experiment, nor its embodiment in human character a mere Utopian expectation. Few men among the followers of Christ have shown less

discrepancy between profession and practice than did James Troup. The best return we can make for all that his friendship was to us is to endeavour to propagate to the end of our days the inspiration drawn from his pure and Christ-like life.

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